To His Excellency the Governor General, &c.

The Memorial of the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the County of Simcoe, in Council assembled,

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH :—

That your Memorialists have on a former occasion addressed your Excellency on the subject of the manner of disposing of the Crown Lands of the Province, and expressed an opinion that it had been injurious to the progress and prosperity of the country, and the advisability of adopting a system of free grants in the future.

Since the Memorial referred to was forwarded to your Excellency, your Memorialists have had reason to believe, not only that the views that they then expressed on this subject were sound ones, but that they are held by a large majority of the people of Upper Canada.

Your Memorialists, however, feel that in placing a limit on the value of the lands to be given as free grants, they acted without due consideration, and are desirous, as the subject is such an important one, to the interests of the Province, to bring it again before your Excellency, and respectfully urge its consideration on the Government, without reference to any limit in the making of such free grants in respect to the value of the land, or otherwise.

Your Memorialists feel bound to again state to your Excellency that they feel satisfied that a free grant system, with proper restrictions as to actual settlement, is the true policy by which the Government of a new country should be guided in the disposal of its Agricultural Lands, inasmuch as rapid settlement tends more than anything else to increase the wealth and material prosperity of the community, and by increasing the number of contributors to the public exchequer, more than makes up in a pecuniary way for the increased direct outlay which would in that case have to be made in connection with the Crown Lands Department; and they would therefore again suggest and press upon the attention of your Excellency the advisability that the Crown Lands in Upper Canada, which are yet at the disposal of the Crown and of the ordinary description suitable for farming purposes, shall in future be offered free to actual settlers, or at a nominal price, to cover the expenses of survey, and accompanied by the most stringent regulations as to settlement; and further that all lands not occupied or held by actual settlers, the purchase money of which is in arrears to the Crown, shall be declared forfeited so soon as the same can be legally done, and at once offered for settlement as an encouragement to immigration, and to obtain for settlement a large quantity of the wild lands of the Province now held by speculators to the great injury of the Agricultural interests of the Province.

Your Memorialists would respectfully beg to call the attention of your Excellency in Council to the suggestions made in their former Memorial, relative to the condition of the settlers in backward townships, such as Morrison and Muskoka, and others recently opened for settlement; and would add that, especially in the case of the townships named, intersecting lines of road should be surveyed and opened, these townships having progressed rapidly and satisfactorily under the free grant system, and only requiring a continuance and extension of the same policy to become an important and thriving settlement.

Your Memorialists trust that your Excellency and the responsible advisers of Her Majesty will be pleased to give this subject the consideration which its importance deserves, believing that the adoption of a free grant policy in respect to the disposing of the farming lands of the Province, still held by the Crown, would greatly advance the best interests of the Province.

And your Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray, &c.

(Signed) THOS. R. FERGUSON, (L.S.)
WARDEN,
Co. Simcoe.

COUNCIL HALL, BARRIE,
Nov. 29th, 1865.

R. T. BANTING,
Co. CLK., Co. SIMCOE.

1865

COUNTY OF ELGIN